

Indonesia: Security chief Mahfud says 92% of regional candidates funded by business tycoons

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Jakarta — Coordinating Minister for Security, Politics and Legal Affairs Mahfud MD says that almost 92 percent of candidate regional heads spread across all of Indonesia are funded by cukong (business tycoons).

On average, said Mahfud, after being elected these candidate regional heads will reciprocate with policies which benefit the cukong.

“There’s everywhere, 92 percent of these candidates are funded by cukong and after they’re elected, it will create corrupt policies”, said Mahfud speaking at a discussion themed “Ensuring Healthy Elections: Avoiding Covid-19 and Corruption”, which was broadcast via the official Andalas University’s (Unand) Constitution Study Center (Pusako) YouTube channel on Friday September 11.

Since direct regional elections came into effect and regional leaders were elected by the people, said Mahfud, many cukong have planted their seeds with election contestants.

Mahfud did not say whether or not candidates paid by cukong are also contesting the 2020 simultaneous regional elections on December 9, the initial stages of which have already begun. He only said that cooperation between candidate regional heads and cukong will definitely happen.

This reciprocal relationship usually takes the form of policies enacted by regional heads after they are officially elected which benefit the cukong. What then happens, said Mahfud, is that the impact of this cooperation with cukong is more dangerous than financial corruption.

Policy corruption, said Mahfud, is usually in the form of forestry concessions, mining permits and other licenses which tend to harm the public.

“Policy corruption is more dangerous than financial corruption. Money can be counted, but policies in the form of forestry concessions, mining concessions, which after I examined them are overlapping”, he said.

“Because there are laws which state, for example, a regent can give a mining exploration permit for a certain percentage of the region”, said Mahfud.

In practice, said Mahfud, these permits are issued for larger areas than they should be. Not a few regional heads even take the initiative to provide new permits for cukong who had previously funded their election campaigns.

This issue of cukong in the election of regional heads was also revealed by Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) leader Nurul Ghufon. According to a study conducted by the KPK, as many as 82

percent of candidate regional heads are funded by sponsors.

“The fact is that in the earlier KPK study there were 82 percent of candidate regional heads, 82 percent were sponsored [by a third party] not funding themselves”, he said.

“Then perhaps as money politics so this shows that later there will be a flow of funds from sponsors to candidate regional heads”, he said. (tst/gil)

CNN Indonesia
James Balowski

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P.S.

Translated by James Balowski. The original title of the article was “Mahfud MD Sebut 92 Persen Calon Kepala Daerah Dibiayai Cukong.”

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